It appears extremely probable that both Lamarck and De Férussac have confounded with this species a variety of *Helix metaformis*, De F., the latter author having figured a var. of that species under the name of *H. mirabilis*, var. See his Tab. 104, f. 6 et 7, and Lamarck, describing his var. β. as "*testâ supernè in conum elongatâ.*"

"I must here acknowledge my obligations to M. Valenciennes, who has informed me in a note that the species I have described under the name of *decipiens* is identical with this species, *H. mirabilis*, De F. I suspect that he may be right in his opinion, and will take the earliest opportunity of re-examining all the varieties of both, together.

"At present I will proceed to describe the principal varieties which have occurred to Mr. Cuming, and which are unquestionably referable to the *mirabilis* of De F."

a. Shell rather thick and strong, with three dark bands, one of which is close to the suture, and much narrower than the others.

b. Shell very thin, with bands similar to the last.

c. Shell with the spire much produced, and with three dark bands, of which the middle one is very slender.

d. Shell very thin, with a narrow sutural band, and a broader circumferential band.

e. Shell thick and strong, with only a very narrow antesutural band.

f. Shell thin, and entirely destitute of bands.

Helix fulgens. *Hel. testâ globoso-pyramidali, crassiusculâ, imperforatâ, lævi, nitidâ, albidâ; spirâ prominulâ, obtusâ; anfractibus* $4\frac{1}{2}$ *ventricosis, castaneo-nigroque fasciatis; lineis incrementi tenerrimè insculptis; aperturâ suborbiculari, intùs albâ; fasciis nigris subconspicuis; peritremate reflexo, albo; columellâ latiusculâ, albâ, profundè ineunte.*

Long 1·5, lat. 1·15 poll.

Hab. ad Puerto Galero insulæ Mindoroensis Philippinarum.

Two principal varieties of this brilliant species have been found by Mr. Cuming; the one has black and chestnut-coloured bands, beautifully relieved on a light-coloured ground, and the other has the posterior part of each volution nearly white, one dark band close behind the circumference, and three close-set dark bands in front.

Helix chrysocheilus. *Hel. testâ subglobosâ, crassiusculâ, lævi, nitidâ, imperforatâ; spirâ mediocri, obtusâ; anfractibus quinque, ventricosis; lineis incrementi tenuiter insculptis, epidermide pallescente indutis; aperturâ suborbiculari, intùs albâ; peritremate incrassato, reflexo, aurantiaco; columellâ latiusculâ, aurantiacâ, profundè ineunte; labio interno tenui.*

Hab. supra folia arborum ad Banqui provinciæ Ilocos septentrionalis ad insulam Luçon Philippinarum.

A very beautiful species, and apparently very distinct from any that have hitherto been noticed. It is extremely rare.

Prof. Owen read his description of a new genus and species of sponge, which he proposes to name *Euplectella Aspergillum*.

"Mr. Cuming has entrusted to me for description," says the author, "one of the most singular and beautiful, as well as the rarest of the ma-

rine productions with which his researches in the Philippine Islands have enabled him to enrich the zoological collections of his native country. This production is, however, a member of the very lowest class of the animal kingdom, if even it be permitted to rank in that division of organized nature. After repeated examination and much reflection, I can arrive at no other conclusion than that the object about to be described is the skeleton or framework of a species of sponge belonging to that division of the class called Horny, in opposition to the calcareous and siliceous groups, and to the Alcyonoid family. It is a hollow, cylindrical, slightly conical, and gently curved case or tube, resembling a delicate cornucopia, with the apex removed. It measures eight inches in length, two inches across the base, and one inch and a quarter across the apex, which is truncated. The base or wider aperture of the tube is sub-elliptical, and is closed by a cap of coarse and somewhat irregular network, gently convex externally, the circumference of which is divided from the walls of the cylinder by a thin projecting plate, standing out like a ruff or frill. This marginal plate varies in breadth from one to three lines. The parietes of the circular cone consist also of a network of coarse fibres, but these exhibit the greatest regularity of disposition, and intersect each other at definite and nearly equal distances throughout the course of the cone. They consist of longitudinal, transverse, and oblique fibres, the latter being of two kinds, winding spirally round the cylinder, but in opposite directions. The strongest fibres are the longitudinal and transverse ones, which are arranged at intervals of about a line and a half, and mark out regular square spaces of the same diameter: these spaces are kept of pretty equal size throughout the cone, from the circumstance of the longitudinal fibres diminishing in number as the cone decreases in size; the mode of diminution is not, however, by abrupt termination, but by the gradual convergence and final interblending of two contiguous longitudinal fibres, and the regularity of the interspaces is therefore disturbed at the intervals of such converging fibres. The fibre resulting from this union of two fibres bears a proportionate thickness to the additional material entering into its composition. The nature of such material is demonstrated at the apex of the cone by the resolution of the longitudinal fibres into their component filaments, each of them dividing at about two thirds of an inch from their extremity into a fasciculus or pencil of extremely delicate, stiff, glistening, elastic threads, resembling the finest hairs of spun glass. The transverse fibres, in like manner, are resolved at the truncated apex of the cone into their component filaments, which intersect those proceeding from the longitudinal fibres, as well as similar pencils from the oblique filaments, the whole forming an irregular silky tuft, which almost closes the apical aperture of the cone.

"The longitudinal fibres are external to the transverse ones, to which they are connected by both the spiral fibres, and by smaller and less regular intersecting fibres at the angles of the squares; the area of each square is thus reduced more or less to a circular form: at about one or two inches from the apex, these connecting reticulate fibres begin to rise in the form of narrow ridges from the general surface

of the network, and sooner on the convex than on the concave side of the bent cone. These ridges at first are short and interrupted; they are then more extended, but irregular in their course, some being transverse, others undulated or curved; but as they approach the base of the cone they are continued into broader ridges, which follow, with more or less regularity, the course of the oblique spiral fibres; the broadest of these ridges would measure two lines and a half. Their structure presents an extremely fine and irregular network, disposed, for the most part, in two plates, which converge as they recede from the general wall of the cone, and terminate in a sharp and well-defined edge. The component fibres of these reticulations, like those of the main network, are resolved into the fine silky filaments above mentioned. The fibres of the coarse irregular network which closes the basal aperture of the cone, and which constitutes the main characteristic of this Alcyonoid sponge, appear to be directly continued from, and, as it were, to include all those which enter into the composition of the longitudinal, transverse and oblique fibres of the wall of the cone; the frill-like ridge above described defining the line of transition from the one to the other. The inner surface of the reticulate parietes of the cone is even; not interrupted by any ridges or processes like those on the outer surface. The number of the longitudinal filaments at the base of the cone is 60; that at the smaller end, where they begin to resolve themselves into their constituent filaments, is 30. The diameter of the longitudinal fibres is about $\frac{1}{40}$th of an inch; that of the transverse fibres is somewhat less. The oblique fibres, where they are most regular, average $\frac{1}{60}$th of an inch; the longitudinal fibres, where they begin to resolve themselves into their component filaments, expand in the direction of a line passing to the centre of the cone, and not in the direction of the plane of its circumference; maintaining, in the latter respect, nearly the same breadth to their entire unraveling; whilst in the other dimension they equal one line in breadth before they are wholly decomposed. Small portions of a finely reticulate plate were loosely attached to some parts of the internal surface. The fibres of these pieces consisted of minute filaments, irregular in their course, branching, anastomosing, and sending off abrupt processes like thorns. The component filaments of the parietal fibres are of two kinds; the one simple, cylindrical, and smooth; the others barbed at pretty regular distances through their whole course, like the hair of certain caterpillars. I have also observed a long filament, simple at one extremity, and becoming barbed at the other. They consist of material like the dried gluten of marine plants, containing a small proportion of azote, and burning away to a charry residuum.

"If the basal aperture of the cone were open, the resemblance to many of the beautiful reticulate Alcyonoid sponges would be very close: its closure by the reticulate convex cap, in the present instance, establishes the generic distinction; and in the exquisite beauty and regularity of the texture of the walls of the cone the species surpasses any of the allied productions that I have, as yet, seen, or found described."